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PRESS RELEASE

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By David Bedard  
176th Wing Public Affairs

## **Alaska Guardsmen rescue bear-attack victim near Galena**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — Airmen with the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center, the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th, 211th, and 212th Rescue Squadrons, as well as Soldiers of the Alaska Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, rescued a victim of a bear attack June 10 near Galena.

According to Alaska Air National Guard Maj. Andrew Williams, Alaska Rescue Coordination Center deputy director, the AK RCC opened the mission in response to a request for assistance from the Alaska State Troopers.

AK RCC dispatched an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter from the 210th RQS and an HC-130J Combat King II from the 211th RQS. On board the Combat King was a 212th RQS Guardian Angel team comprising a combat rescue officer and a pararescueman highly trained in rescue operations. Also on board the aircraft was blood and plasma provided by Providence Alaska Medical Center.

A hunting partner stayed with the victim and was in contact with a good Samaritan pilot flying overhead.

Williams said the Guardian Angel team parachuted from the HC-130 into the rescue objective area and hiked to the location of the injured individual where they provided life-saving care.

"Because of the nature of the victim's injuries, the HC-130 dropped two Guardian Angels to provide immediate, critical care," Williams said.

The HH-60 landed and picked up the patient and the Guardian Angels.

The HH-60 landed in Galena, and the Guardian Angels trans-loaded the patient to the HC-130. The HC-130 air crew evacuated the patient to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, and the patient was trans-loaded to a 1-207th Aviation UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter.

The UH-60 air crew transported the patient to Providence.

Williams credited Tech. Sgt. Katie Magnuson, AK RCC controller, for her expertise, quick thinking and foresight to expedite treatment of the victim by planning for an airdrop. The major also spoke about the importance of interagency coordination throughout the rescue mission.

"This was an amazing effort by all parties involved," Williams said. "It exemplified the intricacies of rescue operations in the state and the interoperability between Army and Air National Guard as well as the Alaska State Troopers.

“Additionally, that blood received from Providence was critical to the patient's survival,” Williams continued.

For this mission, the AK RCC, 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons, and the 1-207th Aviation, were awarded one save.

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